

REMARKS**Claim Rejections -35 USC § 112**

Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as being indefinite. Claim 4 has been amended so that it depends from claim 1.

Applicants respectfully request that the above-cited rejection be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections -35 USC § 103

Claims 1, 10, 13, 18-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over SiCommNet in view of AMS. Claims 3, 5-7; 9, 11, 12, 15, and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over SiCommNet and AMS in view of NIC I and NIC II. Claims 4, 8, and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over SiCommNet, AMS, NIC I, NIC II in view of Auctions.

Independent claims 1, 5, 9, 10, 12, 13, 18, and 20 have been amended to include limitations related to the use of a reserve fund as shown in Figure 5 for managing flow of payment funds. Dependent claims 6, 17, and 21-23 include further limitations related to funding of the development of the system (p. 9), excess-funding (p. 13) and insufficient funding (p. 13). The prior art of record does not teach or suggest the claims as amended.

Applicants respectfully request that the above-cited rejections be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 1, 3-13, and 15-23 will be currently pending in the present application. Claims 1, 4-10, 12-13, 17-18, and 20 have been amended, and claims 21-23 have been added. All objections and rejections having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

In the unlikely event that the transmittal letter is separated from this document and the Patent Office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket no. 426882000400. However, the Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to the Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: 

Robert E. Scheid
Registration No. 42,126

Morrison & Foerster LLP
425 Market Street
San Francisco, California 94105-2482
Telephone: (415) 268-6369
Facsimile: (415) 268-7522